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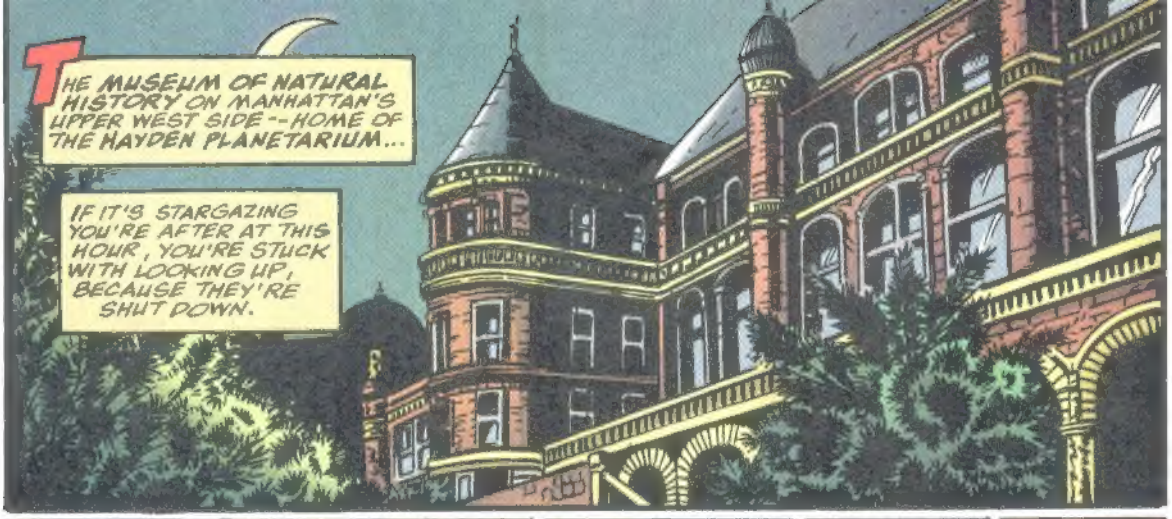

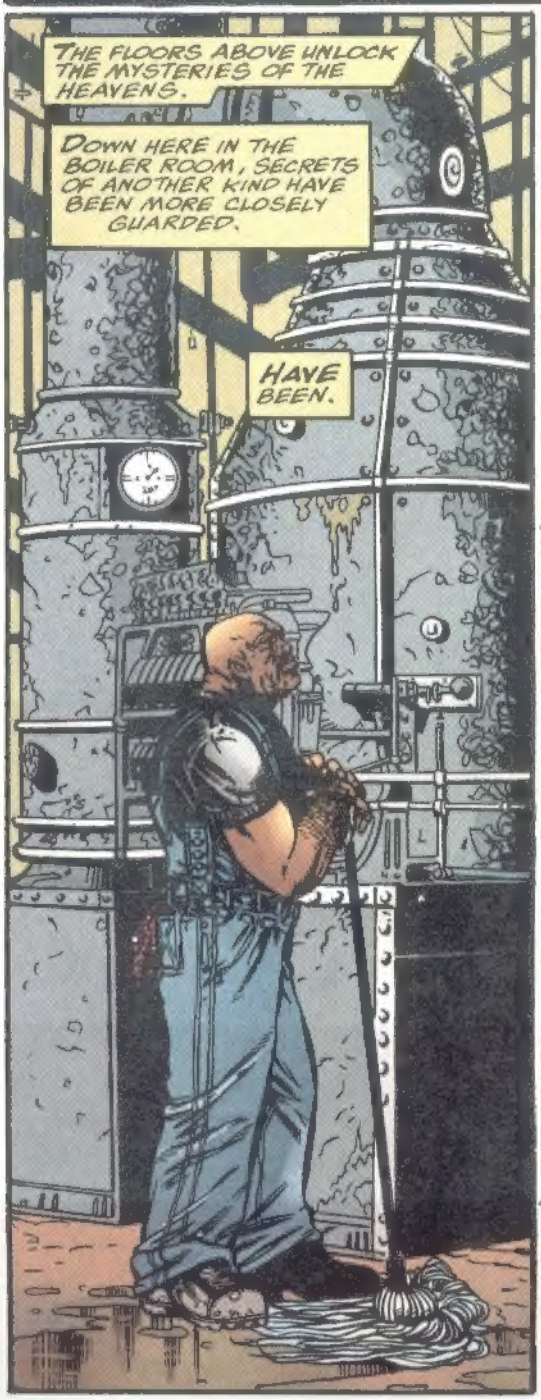

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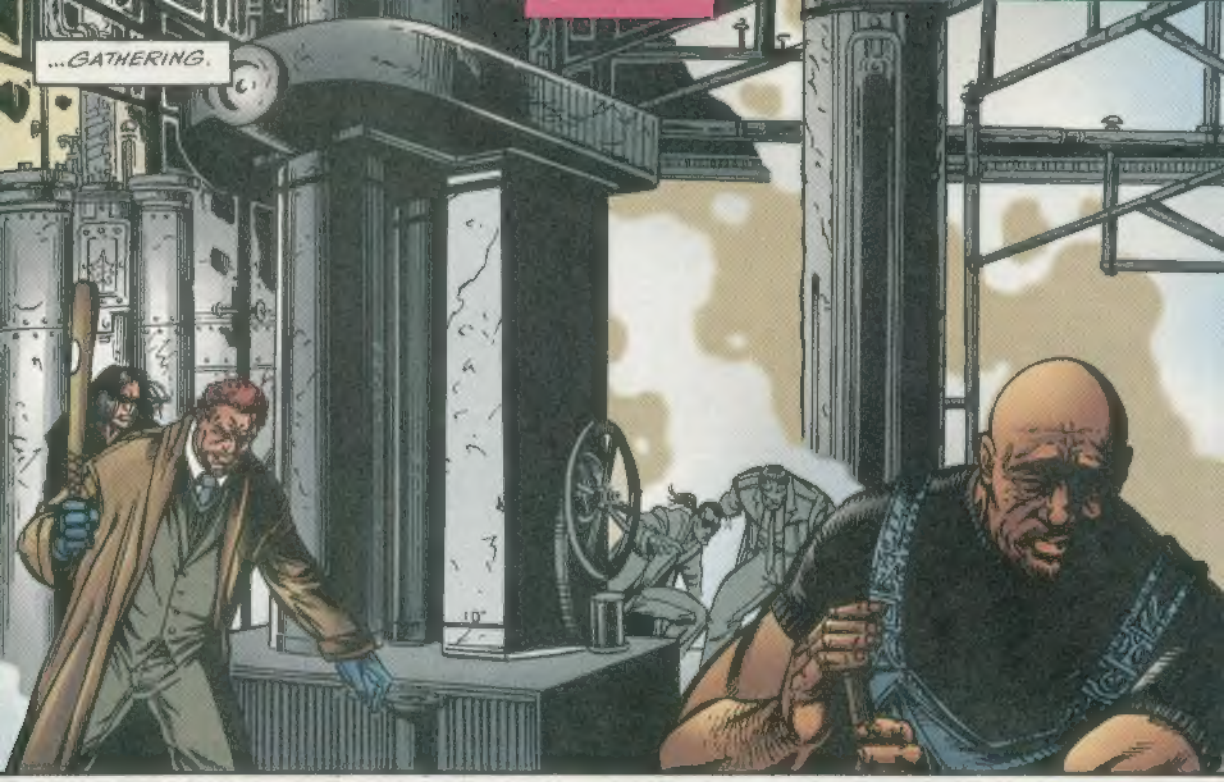

...GATHERING.

DAMN.

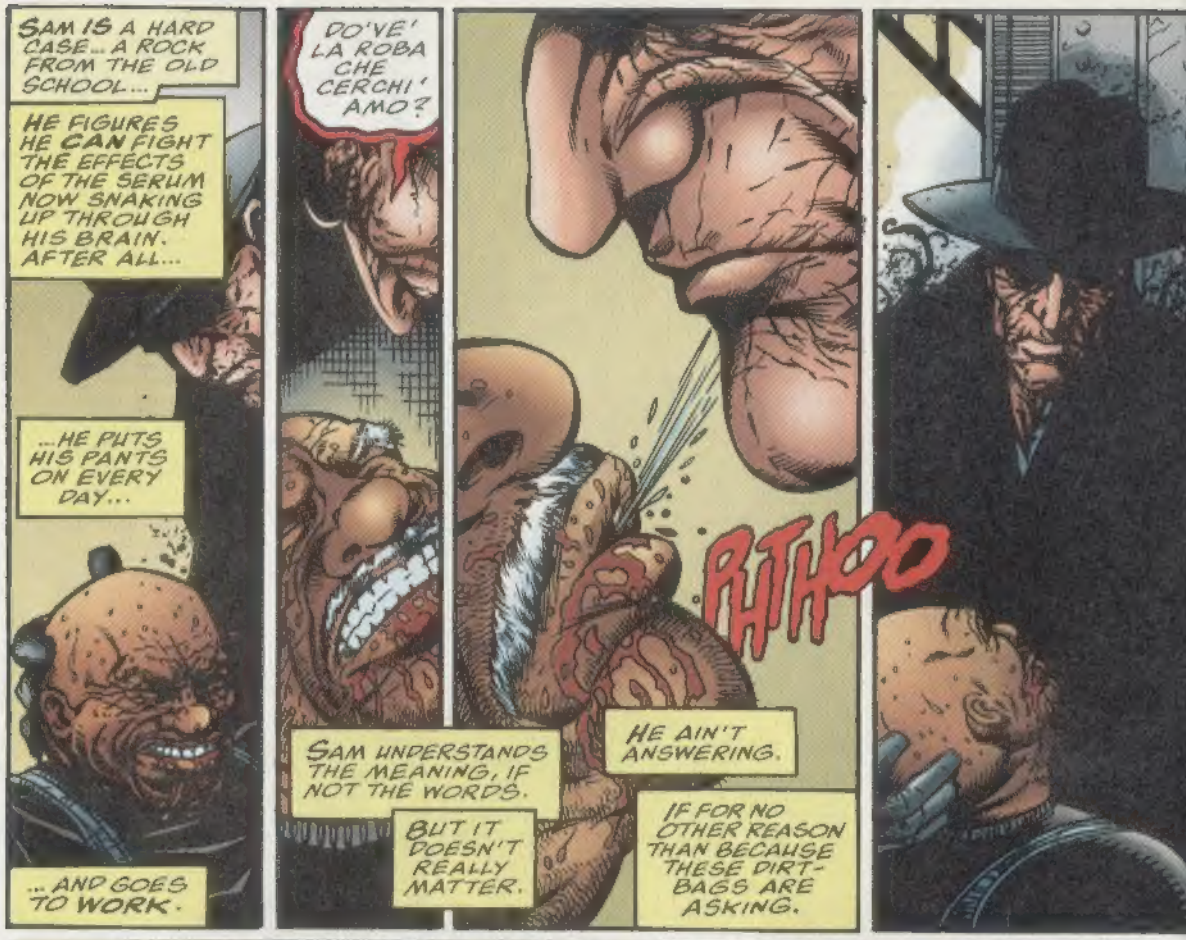
LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY OPENED HIS BIG MOUTH.
BWOOOF!!
SWAK

YEAH, YOU.
WATCH HIM, NICK--WATCH HIM!
BLURBH
KRAKK
THE OLD BEAR CAN STILL DROP THE HAMMER!
NNRGH!
ALRIGHT...

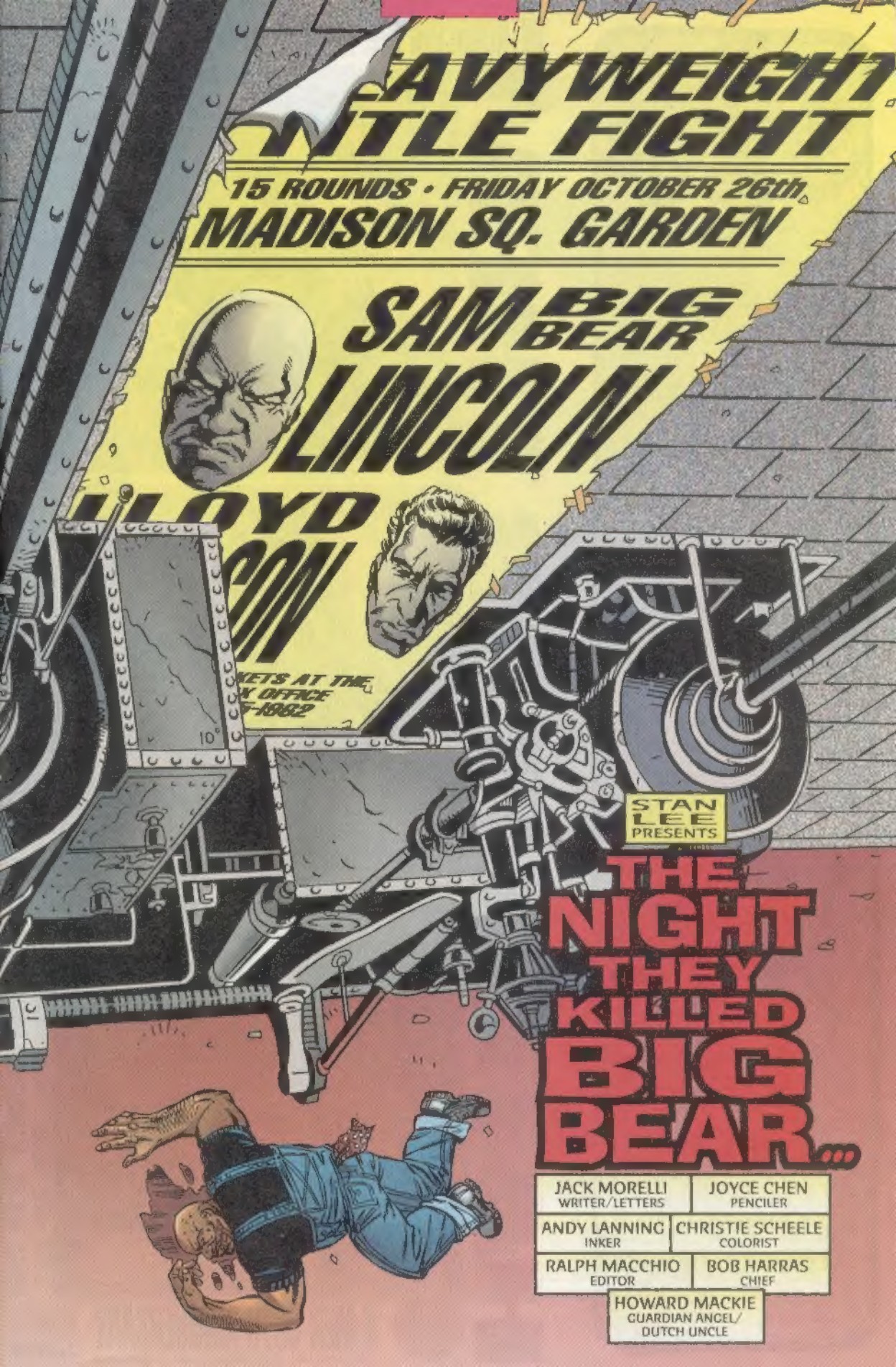
...THAT'S ENOUGH'A THAT.

THWAK
HNNGH!!
C'MON NOW, SAM... WHERE'S IT HID?
NO, huh?
NRRGH!
KRAKT
LET'S HAVE IT, LINCOLN...
NGRHGH!
KRAKT
IT'S... HIM!
BUONA SERA.
THE SILENCER.
EVEN HIS OWN PEOPLE "TASTE THE PENNIES" WHEN HE'S NEAR.
IT'S AN OLD TERM REFERRING TO THAT DRY, COPPERY TASTE IN THE BACK OF YOUR MOUTH...
...THAT ACCOMPANIES INSTINCTIVE FEAR.

QUELLO LI E' NU PEZ E OMME'.
IL DOLORE NON LO ROMPE.
WHAT?
SHHH!
SAYS LINCOLN'S A HARD CASE... TOUGH...
SAYS PAIN AIN'T GONNA CRACK HIM.
WHUZZAT?
AWWW... NO...
NA-AH, MAN...
RAAAHH!!
GIT OFFA ME! NO WAY YOU JABBIN' ME WITH THAT, YOU NO GOOD MU--
BRAKK
OOFF!
NGRFF!
AAGGHH!!
ASPETTI, SIGNORE URSO.
LEMME GO! GIT OFF! I'LL KILL--
GAARRH!!


SAM IS A HARD CASE... A ROCK FROM THE OLD SCHOOL...
HE FIGURES HE CAN FIGHT THE EFFECTS OF THE SERUM NOW SNAKING UP THROUGH HIS BRAIN. AFTER ALL...
...HE PUTS HIS PANTS ON EVERY DAY...
...AND GOES TO WORK.
DO'VE' LA ROBA CHE CERCHI' AMO?
SAM UNDERSTANDS THE MEANING, IF NOT THE WORDS.
BUT IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER.
PHTHOO
HE AIN'T ANSWERING.
IF FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN BECAUSE THESE DIRT-BAGS ARE ASKING.

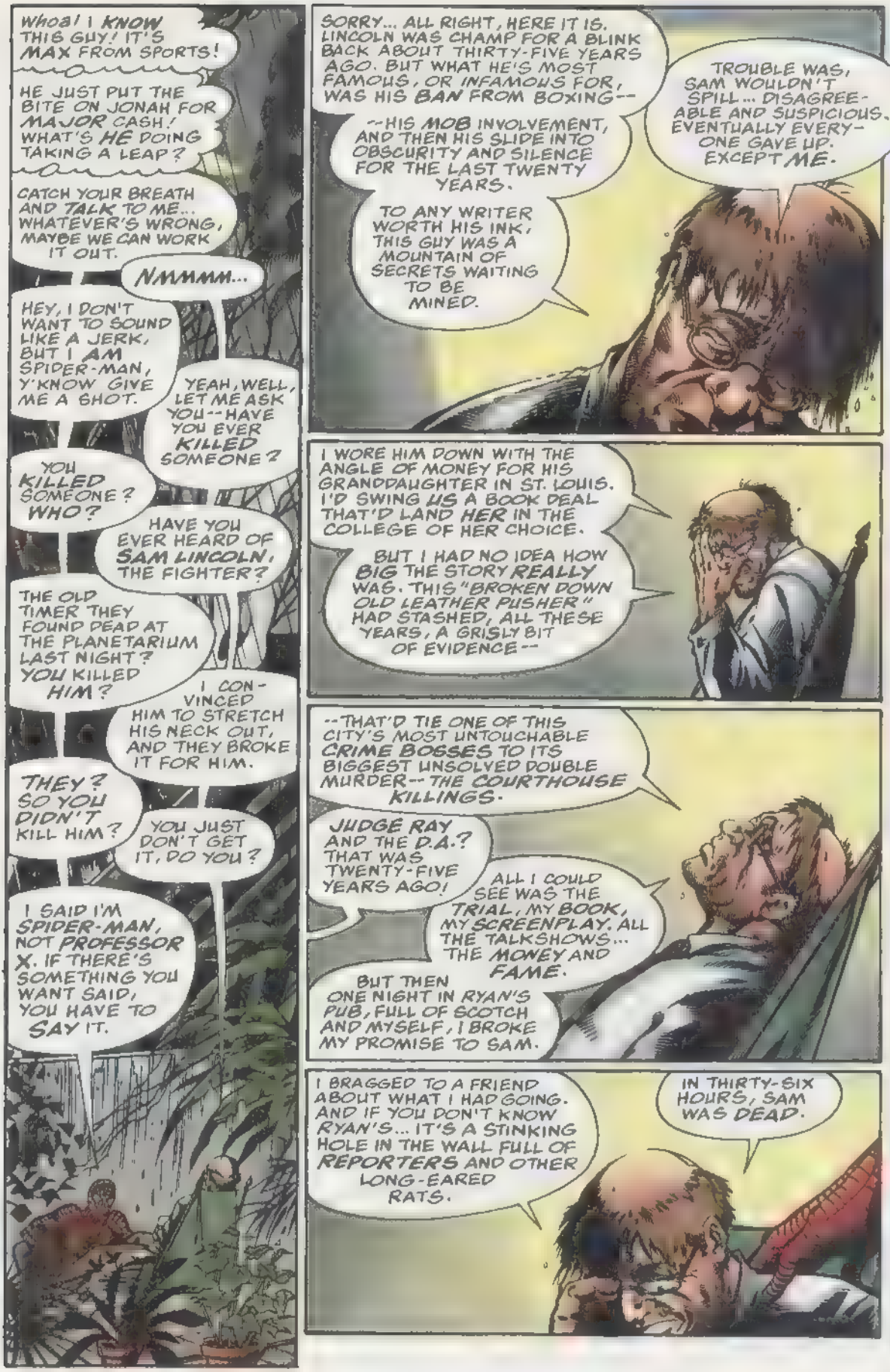
KRATT
SI RIPOSI, VECCHIO GLADITORE.
PAT PAT PAT
NOT A BIG DEAL. THEY'LL JUST FIND IT THEM-SELVES.
YOU COULD COUNT THE PEOPLE SAM LINCOLN TRUSTED ON YOUR THUMB AND INDEX FINGER...
...AND HE'D NEVER SEND A THING LIKE THAT TO HIS GRAND-DAUGHTER.

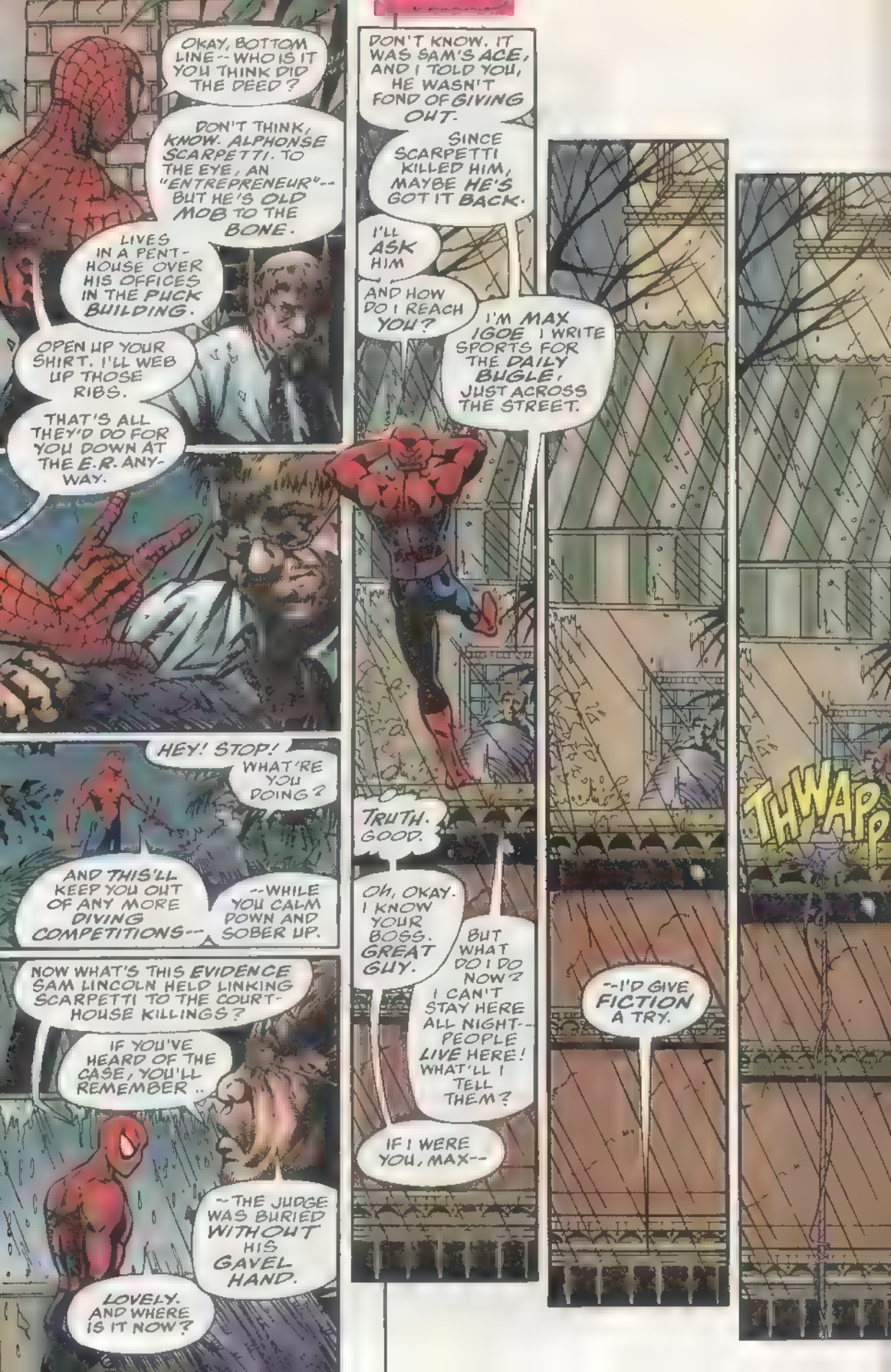

AVYWEIGHT
ITLE FIGHT
15 ROUNDS • FRIDAY OCTOBER 26th
MADISON SQ. GARDEN
SAM BIG BEAR
LINCOLN
LOYD
ON
KETS AT THE
Y OFFICE
-1982
STAN LEE PRESENTS
THE NIGHT THEY KILLED BIG BEAR...
JACK MORELLI
WRITER/LETTERS
JOYCE CHEN
PENCILER
ANDY LANNING
INKER
CHRISTIE SCHEELE
COLORIST
RALPH MACCHIO
EDITOR
BOB HARRAS
CHIEF
HOWARD MACKIE
GUARDIAN ANGEL/
DUTCH UNCLE

MAX IGOE.
KLINK
BEAR DOWN
BEAR DOWN
HIS COLUMN, "IGOE--WHERE THE ACTION IS", HAS BEEN THE ANCHOR OF THE DAILY BUGLE'S SPORTS SECTION FOR YEARS.
HE'S NABBED ABOUT EVERY AWARD FOR JOURNALISM THEY HAND OUT.
THE HEADLINER PLAQUE.
THE PRESS CLUB TROPHY.
THE LAVENTHOL.
THE PULITZER.
HE'S JUST NEGOTIATED A NEW CONTRACT WITH THE PAPER.
THEY MOVED A DECIMAL POINT IN HIS FAVOR.
THERE'S TALK OF A CABLE SHOW.
ONLY YESTERDAY, HE WAS WORKING ON THE BOOK THAT HE KNEW WOULD MAKE HIS PAST LABORS PALE.
THE IMPATIENT SCREENPLAY SCREAMED IN THE BACK OF HIS MIND.
HE COULD SEE THE OSCAR IN HIS FIST.

GOTCHA!
THWUD
KRAKK
..IT WAS IN THE STARS
WAARRGH!

AARRGHH!
whew!
SWAP
I'M SO QUICK TO RIP THE OL' PARKER LUCK WHEN IT'S ROTTEN, I'VE GOTTA STOP AND REMIND MYSELF WHEN IT'S SWEET.
IF PETER PARKER DIDN'T NEED FILM FOR TOMORROW, THEN SPIDER-MAN WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SWINGING UP TO THE BUGLE TONIGHT--
--AND THIS POOR FOOL'D BE GETTING HOSED OUT OF THE GUTTER BY MORNING.
oh my god...
I KNOW IT'S HARD, BUT TRY TO BREATHE EASY. THE PAIN IS YOUR RIBS... THEY BROKE WHEN I CAUGHT YOU. HAPPENS ONCE IN A WHILE.
oh my god...
PEOPLE AREN'T DESIGNED TO BE PLUCKED OUT OF A FREE FALL, BUT IT SURE BEATS THE ALTERNATIVE.
oh my god... oh my god...
Ah-- Ah-- AGGH!
EASY NOW. JUST SIT HERE AND TRY NOT TO MOVE AROUND TOO MUCH.
I--I... Oh... THANK-- THANK YOU... SO-- SO STUPID! SEEMS LIKE... LIKE WHAT YOU WANT... LIKE THE ONLY WAY ... BUT WHEN YOU STEP OFF... Oh, God...
... ALL YOU WANT... ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS LIVE!


Whoa! I KNOW THIS GUY! IT'S MAX FROM SPORTS!
HE JUST PUT THE BITE ON JONAH FOR MAJOR CASH! WHAT'S HE DOING TAKING A LEAP?
CATCH YOUR BREATH AND TALK TO ME... WHATEVER'S WRONG, MAYBE WE CAN WORK IT OUT.
NMMMM...
HEY, I DON'T WANT TO SOUND LIKE A JERK, BUT I AM SPIDER-MAN, Y'KNOW GIVE ME A SHOT.
YEAH, WELL, LET ME ASK YOU--HAVE YOU EVER KILLED SOMEONE?
YOU KILLED SOMEONE? WHO?
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF SAM LINCOLN, THE FIGHTER?
THE OLD TIMER THEY FOUND DEAD AT THE PLANETARIUM LAST NIGHT? YOU KILLED HIM?
I CONVINCED HIM TO STRETCH HIS NECK OUT, AND THEY BROKE IT FOR HIM.
THEY? SO YOU DIDN'T KILL HIM?
YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU?
I SAID I'M SPIDER-MAN, NOT PROFESSOR X. IF THERE'S SOMETHING YOU WANT SAID, YOU HAVE TO SAY IT.
SORRY... ALL RIGHT, HERE IT IS. LINCOLN WAS CHAMP FOR A BLINK BACK ABOUT THIRTY-FIVE YEARS AGO. BUT WHAT HE'S MOST FAMOUS, OR INFAMOUS FOR, WAS HIS BAN FROM BOXING--
--HIS MOB INVOLVEMENT, AND THEN HIS SLIDE INTO OBSCURITY AND SILENCE FOR THE LAST TWENTY YEARS.
TO ANY WRITER WORTH HIS INK, THIS GUY WAS A MOUNTAIN OF SECRETS WAITING TO BE MINED.
TROUBLE WAS, SAM WOULDN'T SPILL... DISAGREEABLE AND SUSPICIOUS. EVENTUALLY EVERYONE GAVE UP. EXCEPT ME.
I WORE HIM DOWN WITH THE ANGLE OF MONEY FOR HIS GRANDDAUGHTER IN ST. LOUIS. I'D SWING US A BOOK DEAL THAT'D LAND HER IN THE COLLEGE OF HER CHOICE.
BUT I HAD NO IDEA HOW BIG THE STORY REALLY WAS. THIS "BROKEN DOWN OLD LEATHER PUSHER" HAD STASHED, ALL THESE YEARS, A GRISLY BIT OF EVIDENCE--
--THAT'D TIE ONE OF THIS CITY'S MOST UNTOUCHABLE CRIME BOSSES TO ITS BIGGEST UNSOLVED DOUBLE MURDER--THE COURTHOUSE KILLINGS.
JUDGE RAY AND THE D.A.? THAT WAS TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO!
ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE TRIAL, MY BOOK, MY SCREENPLAY. ALL THE TALKSHOWS... THE MONEY AND FAME.
BUT THEN ONE NIGHT IN RYAN'S PUB, FULL OF SCOTCH AND MYSELF, I BROKE MY PROMISE TO SAM.
I BRAGGED TO A FRIEND ABOUT WHAT I HAD GOING. AND IF YOU DON'T KNOW RYAN'S... IT'S A STINKING HOLE IN THE WALL FULL OF REPORTERS AND OTHER LONG-EARED RATS.
IN THIRTY-SIX HOURS, SAM WAS DEAD.


OKAY, BOTTOM LINE -- WHO IS IT YOU THINK DID THE DEED?
DON'T THINK, KNOW. ALPHONSE SCARPETTI. TO THE EYE, AN "ENTREPRENEUR" -- BUT HE'S OLD MOB TO THE BONE.
LIVES IN A PENT-HOUSE OVER HIS OFFICES IN THE PUCK BUILDING.
OPEN UP YOUR SHIRT. I'LL WEB UP THOSE RIBS.
THAT'S ALL THEY'D DO FOR YOU DOWN AT THE E.R. ANY-WAY.
DON'T KNOW. IT WAS SAM'S ACE, AND I TOLD YOU, HE WASN'T FOND OF GIVING OUT.
SINCE SCARPETTI KILLED HIM, MAYBE HE'S GOT IT BACK.
I'LL ASK HIM
AND HOW DO I REACH YOU?
I'M MAX IGOE I WRITE SPORTS FOR THE DAILY BUGLE, JUST ACROSS THE STREET.
HEY! STOP! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
AND THIS'LL KEEP YOU OUT OF ANY MORE DIVING COMPETITIONS--
--WHILE YOU CALM DOWN AND SOBER UP.
TRUTH. GOOD.
OH, OKAY. I KNOW YOUR BOSS. GREAT GUY.
BUT WHAT DO I DO NOW? I CAN'T STAY HERE ALL NIGHT-- PEOPLE LIVE HERE! WHAT'LL I TELL THEM?
IF I WERE YOU, MAX--
--I'D GIVE FICTION A TRY.
THWAPP
NOW WHAT'S THIS EVIDENCE SAM LINCOLN HELD LINKING SCARPETTI TO THE COURT-HOUSE KILLINGS?
IF YOU'VE HEARD OF THE CASE, YOU'LL REMEMBER ..
--THE JUDGE WAS BURIED WITHOUT HIS GAVEL HAND.
LOVELY. AND WHERE IS IT NOW?

MacKINLEY "MAC" STEWART.
HE'S THE THUMB
AFTER DROPPING A CLOSE DECISION IN HIS BID FOR THE HEAVYWEIGHT TITLE A FEW YEARS BACK, HE LEFT BOXING TO RUN THIS STOREFRONT KARATE DOJO.
IT'S HERE THAT MAC MET AND BECAME .. FRIENDS WITH A WOMAN NAMED ELEKTRA.
BUT ELEKTRA'S A DANGEROUS LADY, WITH DANGEROUS ENEMIES.
A GROUP OF NINJAS KNOWN AS THE HAND.
THEY WRECKED THE DOJO.
THEY WRECKED HIM *
*ELEKTRA #19 -- RALF
MAC WAS HALF IN THE GRAVE FOR A LONG TIME
AND WHEN HE FINALLY GOT HOME HE FOUND A MESSAGE FROM MAN AND HER FRIEND..
klunk
WITH DANGEROUS ENEMIES.

HELLO, MR STEWART.
WE'RE CHECKING ON A PACKAGE THAT MIGHT'VE BEEN SENT HERE BY MISTAKE.
PACKAGE? I DON'T HAVE YOUR PACKAGE, PAL.
AND I HAVEN'T SEEN HER EITHER.
HER? WHO--
BRAKK
OUT!
NNGH!
GGNNGH!
NEWS-FLASH, PUNCHY--
--FIGHT'S OVER--
--YOU LOSE AGAIN.
HEARD FROM SAM LINCOLN LATELY?
GGRRGLLL
SAM'S.. DEAD... YOU...
REALLY? YOU INHERIT A LITTLE SOME-THING?
GO TO--
HEARRGH!
AWRIGHT, FELLAS, RIP WHAT'S LEFT OF THIS DUMP APART!
THOOF
FIND IT!!

WHERE IS IT, STEWART? AND WHO'S THIS HER?
SOME DAME IN THE MIX NOW?
SHE HERE, STEWART? SHE HAVE THE--
KRAKKT
Oh, I'M HERE, PIG.
AND I DO HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU--
--BUT I DOUBT IT'S WHAT YOU WANT!
ELEKTRA!
MIKE--QUICK! THERE'S A BOUNTY ON THIS BROAD--A BIG ONE!! SHOOT! SHOOT!

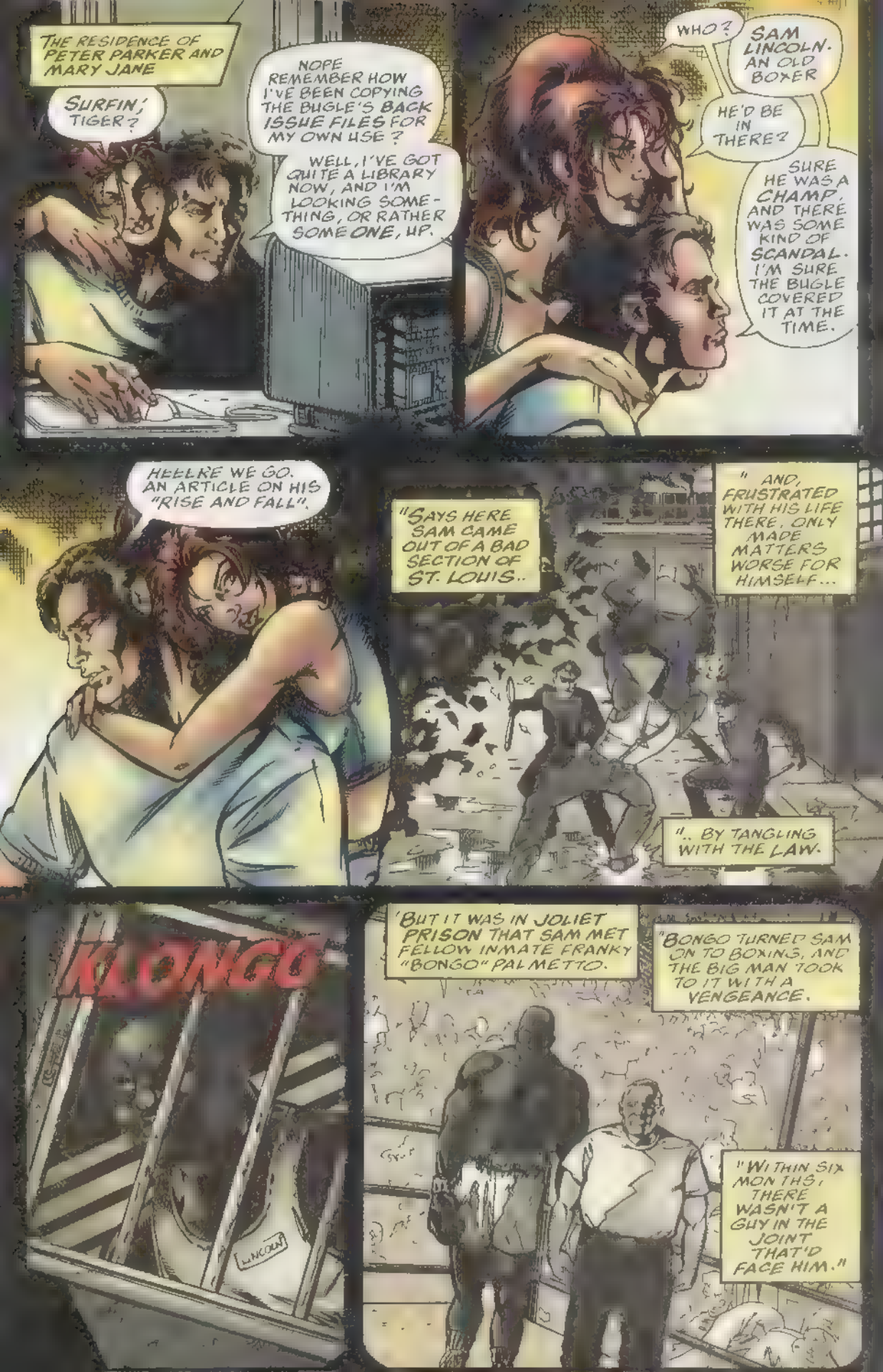
BRAATT
BLAMM
BLAMM BLAMM
GARRGH!
SKA-RAK
WHUDD
BOSS! THE WHOLE THING'S DOWN THE CAN!
ELEKTRA'S HERE! THE WHACKED OUT BROAD'S THROWIN' EVERYONE A BEATIN'! WE BETTER--
EASY, MICHAEL, EEEAASY. THIS, TOO, IS CONTROLLABLE.
YOU SHOULD KNOW BY NOW--
OOFF!

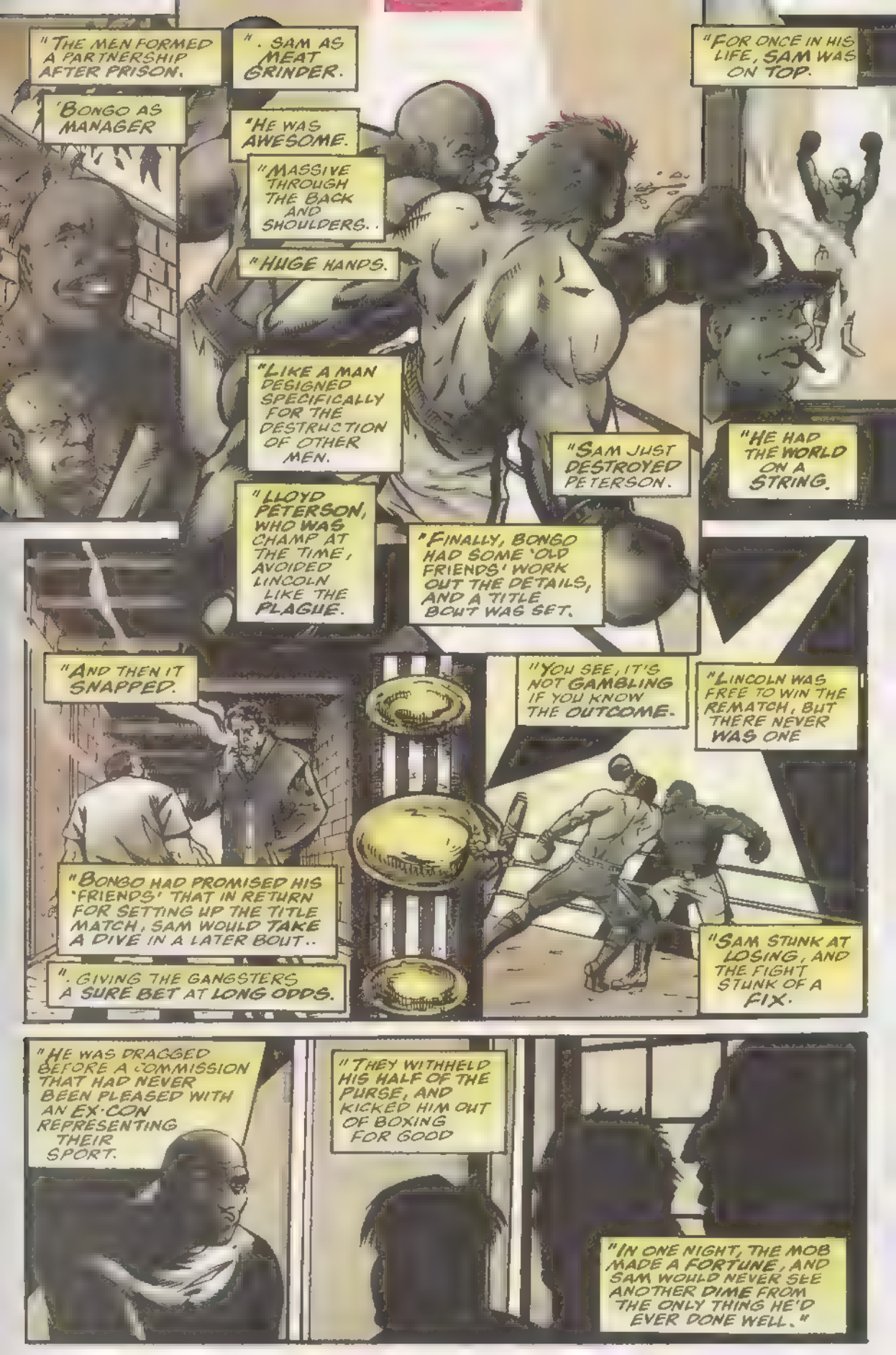
krak
krik
krik
"-- HE'S NEVER FAR AWAY."
SHE FEELS IT IN HER HEAD AND ALL AROUND HER
LIKE A SUDDEN, SEVERE DROP IN THE AIR PRESSURE
THE DAMP, REACHING BLACKNESS IS EVERY WHERE
HER SKULL'S IN A VISE. HER EARS WANT TO POP.
ALL AT ONCE, THE BIG ROOM SEEMS THE SIZE OF AN ELEVATOR
IT PLUNGES.

BUT ELEKTRA IS NOT A WOMAN TO PANIC--
SHE RESPONDS INSTANTLY, WITH FLAWLESS TECHNIQUES MASTERED OVER YEARS OF TIRELESS TRAINING
SMASSH
UNGH!!
WHAT'S THIS? A CHAMPIONSHIP BELT? IT'S WRAPPED AROUND SOMETHING.
HEY, GUYS--
GOT IT! I GOT IT!!
LET'S GET THE H--
YARRGH!!
SLAM
KRUNCH
COME ON UP THE STAIRS. JUST A COUPLE MORE AN OLD LADY COULD DO IT, FOR CRYIN' OUT--

SKRAKTT
THE BOX!
YARRGH!
SHUNGG
Yaaaa...
SWOOOFF
GLARRGH!
GRRRTTT...
.OOORRRFFF!
SKREEEUUNCH
KLINK

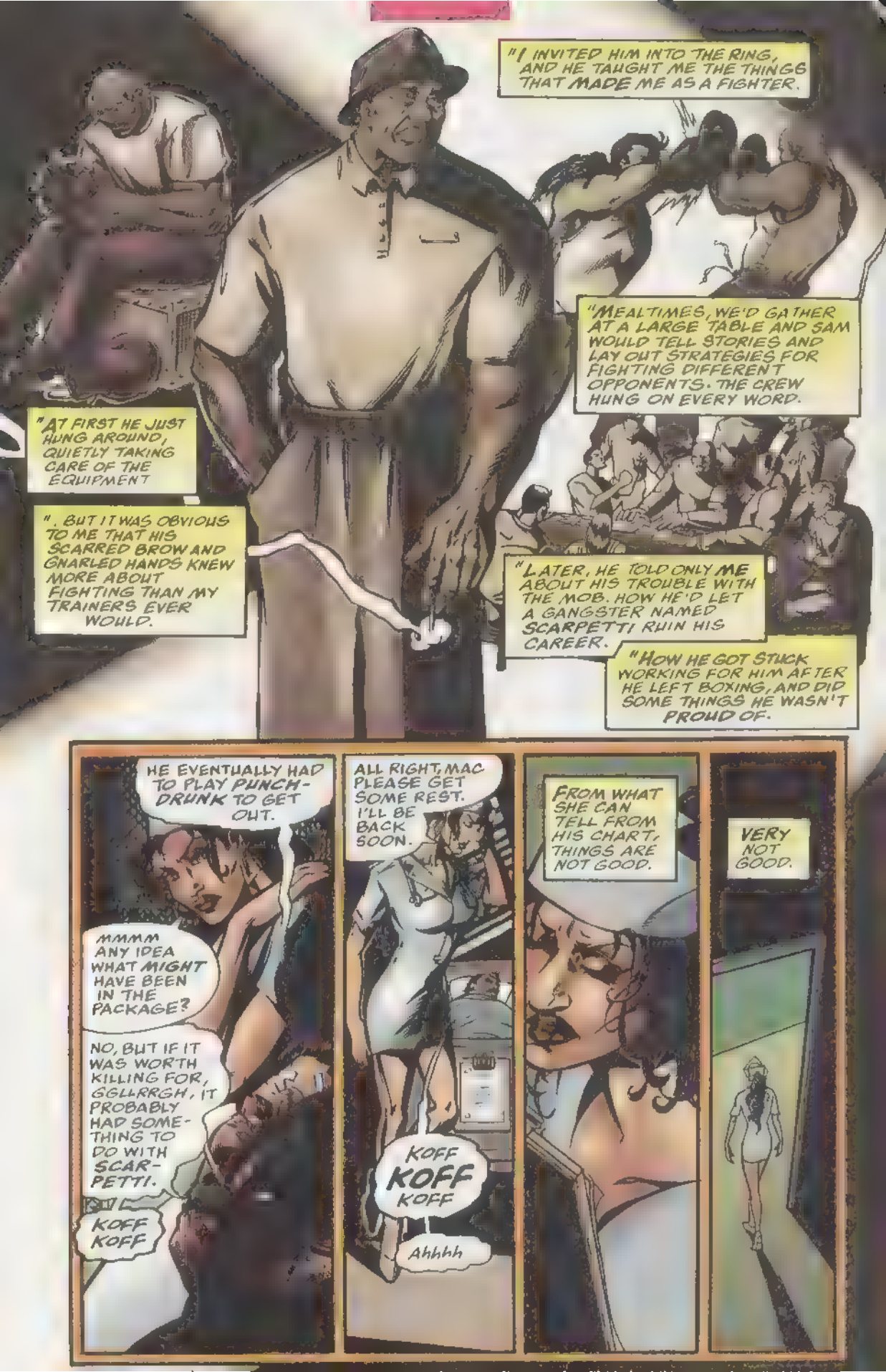
SWAMM
ARGGH!!
THE RE-SHATTERED ARM OF MacKINLEY STEWART TREMBLES ITS WAY UP TO THE FIRE ALARM
KLIK
WEEEEOOOOO
ALTOGETHER A SIMPLE ACT..
AND A STUNNING DISPLAY OF JUST HOW FORMIDABLE THE MAN HAD ONCE BEEN
I THINK SHE'S DEAD WE'D BETTER GO. THEY'LL BE HERE SOON
DAMME LA CASSA.
Hm? Oh, YES I HAVE IT
DEAD? NOT THIS ONE
FACT IS, THEY'RE ONLY GONE A FEW SECONDS WHEN THE SPRINKLERS AND ALARM ROUSE HER
WEEEEOOOOO WEEEEOOOOO
ELEKTRA'S TOUGH ALL RIGHT.
TOUGH AS A TWO DOLLAR STEAK.
OR OLD BOOTS.
SOMETIMES.
Oh, MAC .MAC... I SHOULD'VE BEEN SMARTER.. KNOWN BETTER.
SHOULD'VE KNOWN THAT BEING WHO I AM WHAT I AM... THAT WHEN I ALLOWED MYSELF TO CARE FOR YOU..
..I SENTENCED YOU TO DEATH.
SHE CAN'T STAY MAC WOULDN'T WANT HER TO
NEW YORK'S FINEST AND BRAVEST WILL BE HERE ANY SECOND, AND THE ENTIRE CITY--NO, HALF THE WORLD-- IS HUNTING HER FOR A SERIES OF VICIOUS MURDERS.
SHE DIDN'T COMMIT THEM, BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER
ELEKTRA'S REPUTATION SPEAKS FOR ITSELF.
WEEEEOOOOOWWEEEEEEEOOOOO


THE RESIDENCE OF PETER PARKER AND MARY JANE
SURFIN', TIGER?
NOPE REMEMBER HOW I'VE BEEN COPYING THE BUGLE'S BACK ISSUE FILES FOR MY OWN USE?
WELL, I'VE GOT QUITE A LIBRARY NOW, AND I'M LOOKING SOMETHING, OR RATHER SOMEONE, UP.
WHO?
SAM LINCOLN. AN OLD BOXER
HE'D BE IN THERE?
SURE HE WAS A CHAMP, AND THERE WAS SOME KIND OF SCANDAL. I'M SURE THE BUGLE COVERED IT AT THE TIME.
HEELRE WE GO. AN ARTICLE ON HIS "RISE AND FALL".
"SAYS HERE SAM CAME OUT OF A BAD SECTION OF ST. LOUIS..
" AND, FRUSTRATED WITH HIS LIFE THERE, ONLY MADE MATTERS WORSE FOR HIMSELF...
".. BY TANGLING WITH THE LAW.
KLONGO
LINCOLN
'BUT IT WAS IN JOLIET PRISON THAT SAM MET FELLOW INMATE FRANKY "BONGO" PALMETTO.
"BONGO TURNED SAM ON TO BOXING, AND THE BIG MAN TOOK TO IT WITH A VENGEANCE.
"WITHIN SIX MONTHS, THERE WASN'T A GUY IN THE JOINT THAT'D FACE HIM."


"THE MEN FORMED A PARTNERSHIP AFTER PRISON.
". SAM AS MEAT GRINDER.
"FOR ONCE IN HIS LIFE, SAM WAS ON TOP.
'BONGO AS MANAGER
"HE WAS AWESOME.
"MASSIVE THROUGH THE BACK AND SHOULDERS..
"HUGE HANDS.
"LIKE A MAN DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF OTHER MEN.
"SAM JUST DESTROYED PETERSON.
"HE HAD THE WORLD ON A STRING.
"LLOYD PETERSON, WHO WAS CHAMP AT THE TIME, AVOIDED LINCOLN LIKE THE PLAGUE.
"FINALLY, BONGO HAD SOME 'OLD FRIENDS' WORK OUT THE DETAILS, AND A TITLE BOUT WAS SET.
"AND THEN IT SNAPPED.
"YOU SEE, IT'S NOT GAMBLING IF YOU KNOW THE OUTCOME.
"LINCOLN WAS FREE TO WIN THE REMATCH, BUT THERE NEVER WAS ONE
"BONGO HAD PROMISED HIS 'FRIENDS' THAT IN RETURN FOR SETTING UP THE TITLE MATCH, SAM WOULD TAKE A DIVE IN A LATER BOUT..
". GIVING THE GANGSTERS A SURE BET AT LONG ODDS.
"SAM STUNK AT LOSING, AND THE FIGHT STUNK OF A FIX.
"HE WAS DRAGGED BEFORE A COMMISSION THAT HAD NEVER BEEN PLEASED WITH AN EX-CON REPRESENTING THEIR SPORT.
"THEY WITHHELD HIS HALF OF THE PURSE, AND KICKED HIM OUT OF BOXING FOR GOOD
"IN ONE NIGHT, THE MOB MADE A FORTUNE, AND SAM WOULD NEVER SEE ANOTHER DIME FROM THE ONLY THING HE'D EVER DONE WELL."

LET'S LOOK UP ALPHONSE SCARPETTI.
WHO'S THAT NOW?
THE GUY THAT SET IT ALL UP. PROBABLY THE ONE WHO HAD SAM KILLED THE OTHER NIGHT, AND JUST MAYBE WE CAN PROVE..
HE WAS THE MAN BEHIND THE OLD COURTHOUSE KILLINGS!
OH, YOU'RE KIDDING!
NO
WELL, THERE'S NOTHING HERE EXCEPT WHAT WE ALREADY KNEW
HE'S SUSPECTED OF EVERY-THING, BUT CONVICTED OF NOTHING...
. AND KEEPS VERY QUIET.
I'LL GO CHECK ON HIM FIRST-HAND.
NO PUN INTENDED
LISTEN, PETER.. I KNOW THIS SCARPETTI GUY DOESN'T HAVE EIGHT ROBOTIC ARMS, A POISONOUS TAIL, OR CAN LIFT THE CHRYSLER BUILDING.
...BUT PROMISE ME YOU WON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN. PLEASE..
BE CAREFUL.
ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha
I KNOW.

LENOX HILL HOSPITAL ..
MAC IS BACK
NNNURSE ?
NO
IT'S ME.
I HAD TO LIFT THIS UNIFORM TO SNEAK IN HERE THE WHOLE CITY'S STILL AFTER ME
HOW'RE YOU FEELING?
IN SOME PARTS ROTTEN --IN OTHERS, GGRRRGGLL. NOT AT ALL.
THOSE MEN WEREN'T FROM THE HAND. TELL ME, MAC -- WHO DID THIS TO YOU?
NOT SURE THEY WERE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING A FRIEND SENT ME.
KOFF KOFF
GUESS THEY GOT IT.
WHAT WAS IT, MAC?
NEVER GOT IT OPEN.
IT WAS FROM SAM LINCOLN... AN OLD FIGHTER WHO'D HAD SOME.. PROBLEMS.
KOFF!
HE WAS MURDERED THE NIGHT BEFORE I GOT HOME
BUT I FIRST KNEW HIM BACK WHEN I WAS FIGHTING. GGRRGLL... HE JUST SHOWED UP AT MY TRAINING CAMP
SAM'D BEEN AWAY FROM THE FIGHT GAME A LONG TIME, AND I COULD TELL IT WAS CHEWIN' HIM UP INSIDE.
HE WAS WORKING NIGHTS AS A JANITOR.. KOFF.. SO I TOLD HIM HE COULD SPEND HIS DAYS WITH US.


"I INVITED HIM INTO THE RING, AND HE TAUGHT ME THE THINGS THAT MADE ME AS A FIGHTER.
"MEALTIMES, WE'D GATHER AT A LARGE TABLE AND SAM WOULD TELL STORIES AND LAY OUT STRATEGIES FOR FIGHTING DIFFERENT OPPONENTS. THE CREW HUNG ON EVERY WORD.
"AT FIRST HE JUST HUNG AROUND, QUIETLY TAKING CARE OF THE EQUIPMENT
". BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS TO ME THAT HIS SCARRED BROW AND GNARLED HANDS KNEW MORE ABOUT FIGHTING THAN MY TRAINERS EVER WOULD.
"LATER, HE TOLD ONLY ME ABOUT HIS TROUBLE WITH THE MOB. HOW HE'D LET A GANGSTER NAMED SCARPETTI RUIN HIS CAREER.
"HOW HE GOT STUCK WORKING FOR HIM AFTER HE LEFT BOXING, AND DID SOME THINGS HE WASN'T PROUD OF.
HE EVENTUALLY HAD TO PLAY PUNCH-DRUNK TO GET OUT.
MMMM ANY IDEA WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN IN THE PACKAGE?
NO, BUT IF IT WAS WORTH KILLING FOR, GGLLRRGH, IT PROBABLY HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH SCARPETTI.
KOFF KOFF
ALL RIGHT, MAC PLEASE GET SOME REST. I'LL BE BACK SOON.
KOFF KOFF KOFF
Ahhhh
FROM WHAT SHE CAN TELL FROM HIS CHART, THINGS ARE NOT GOOD.
VERY NOT GOOD.

THE PUCK BUILDING.
THE HOME OFFICE OF ONE ALPHONSE SCARPETTI.
WELL, THERE HE IS. AND HE SEEMS AS INTERESTED IN THAT BOX ON HIS DESK AS I AM.
YOU MIGHT THINK THAT AMONG HIS CROWD, HE'D'VE HAD ONE OF THOSE NICKNAMES, LIKE "BIG AL", OR "AL SCARS" BUT NO, NO ONE HAS EVER CALLED HIM ANYTHING...
...BUT MISTER SCARPETTI.
THE KEY TO HIS SUCCESS HAS BEEN HIS ABILITY TO MAKE MONEY, NOT HEADLINES.
BECAUSE HE DOES NOT WANT IT KNOWN BY ANYONE THAT HIS MEN HAVE BEEN ANYWHERE, HE'S ALREADY INSTRUCTED THEM NOT TO CLAIM THE BOUNTY ON-
BRAKTCH
ELEKTRA! WHAT ARE YOU--
YOUR LIFE'S WORK HAS BEEN GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER.
BOTH ARE OVER!
KEE-RASHH
SWOOOSH
THWIPP
TING
ARGH!!
SLIKKIT

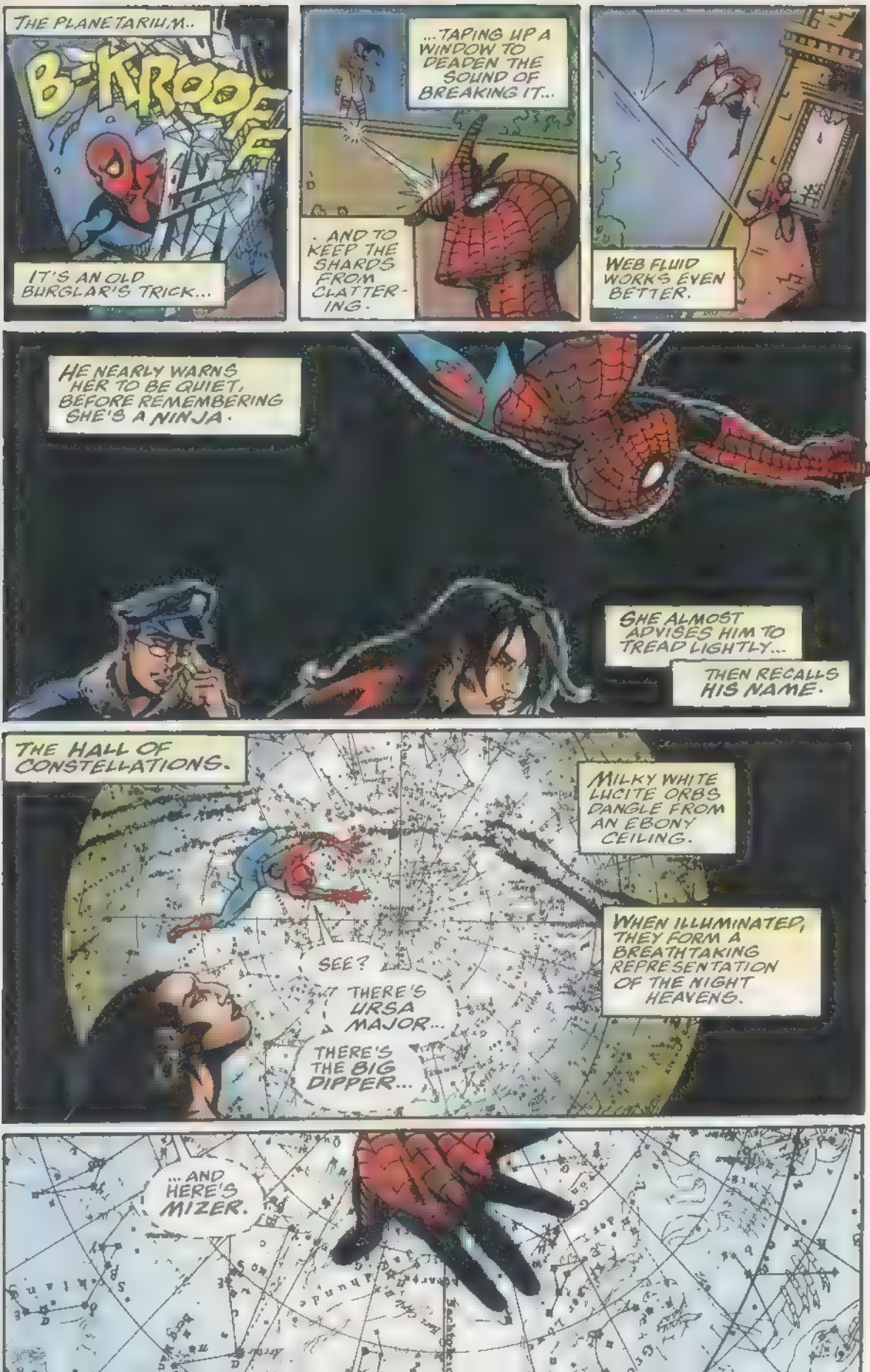
ELEKTRA! SO YOU HAVE BEEN ON A KILLING SPREE?!
NO! THIS FANCY SLIME IS THE KILLER HERE!
LADY, I CAN'T LET ANYBODY GET KILLED, SO SAVE IT!
ARRRHHH.
YOU! SPIDER MAN, LOOK OUT! I'VE MET THIS ONE--
SWOOF
SHUNG
shrrriikkkt
--HE'S VERY DEADLY!
THANKS, BUT MY SPIDER-SENSE WAS WAY AHEAD OF-- Whoa!
NOBODY HOME!
SPIDER-MAN!
UNG!
THOF

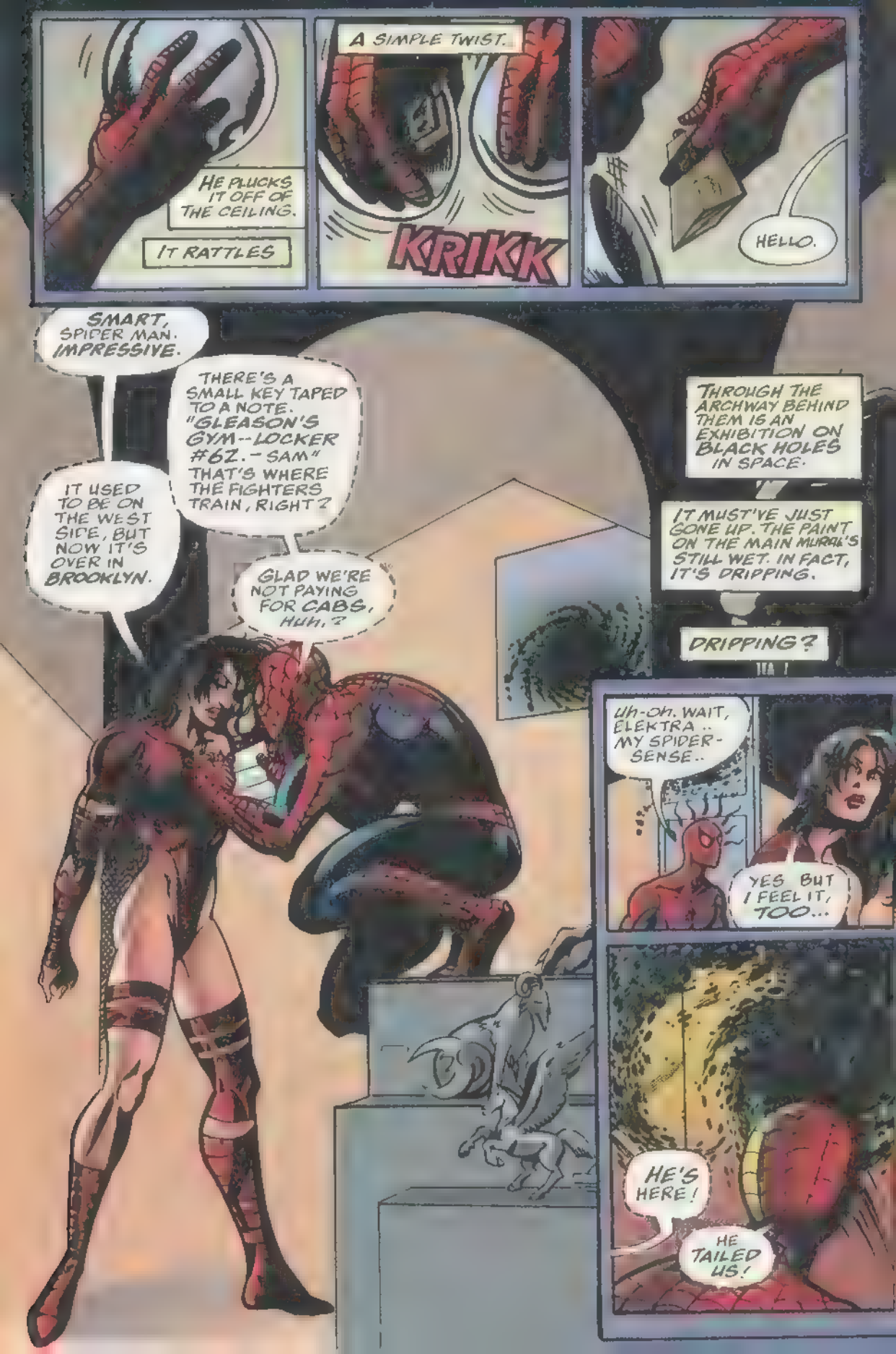
KREEESSHH
IF I'M LEAVING ... SO IS THAT BOX!
THWIPP
GRAB ON!!
UNFF!
BLAMM!
ARRGH!
HOLD ON! JUST A SECOND LONGER!
I'M TRYING, LADY--
--BUT I HATE GETTING SHOT!
SWOOP
SKRANKK
GOT IT!!
NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
JUST LET GO-- I WON'T LET YOU HIT!
I TRUST YOU.
LET'S GO.

LENOX HILL, THE NEXT EVENING
YOU THERE! WHAT'RE YOU DOING? AND WHERE'S YOUR I.D. TAG?
I GOT IT RIGHT HERE.
THUNK
I...UH
UMM, ELEKTRA
tap tap tap
WHILE I'M DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO BELIEVE YOU ABOUT BEING WRONGLY ACCUSED..
..PLEASE DON'T KILL ANYONE ELSE.
IF I WANTED, HE'D BE DEAD ALREADY.
TRUE
SCARPETTI CERTAINLY IS PERSISTENT, HUH?
HEEYY... WAKE UP, MAC SPIDER-MAN AND I FOUND OUT WHAT WAS IN THE PACKAGE IT WAS AN AUDIO TAPE.
THERE'S A MESSAGE ON IT FOR YOU, BUT WE DON'T UNDERSTAND IT. DO YOU FEEL UP TO LISTENING?
HRM?
I'LL TRY. HEY, KOFF KOFF, WHAT'D YOU DO TO YER HAIR?
MY NEW STYLIST'S... IMPULSIVE.
YEAH, I HAD A BIT OF TROUBLE WITH HIM, TOO HE MISUNDERSTOOD "A LITTLE OFF THE TOP".
IT REALLY IS SPIDER-MAN! PUT THE TAPE IN, LET'S HEAR IT.
KOFF
KLIK

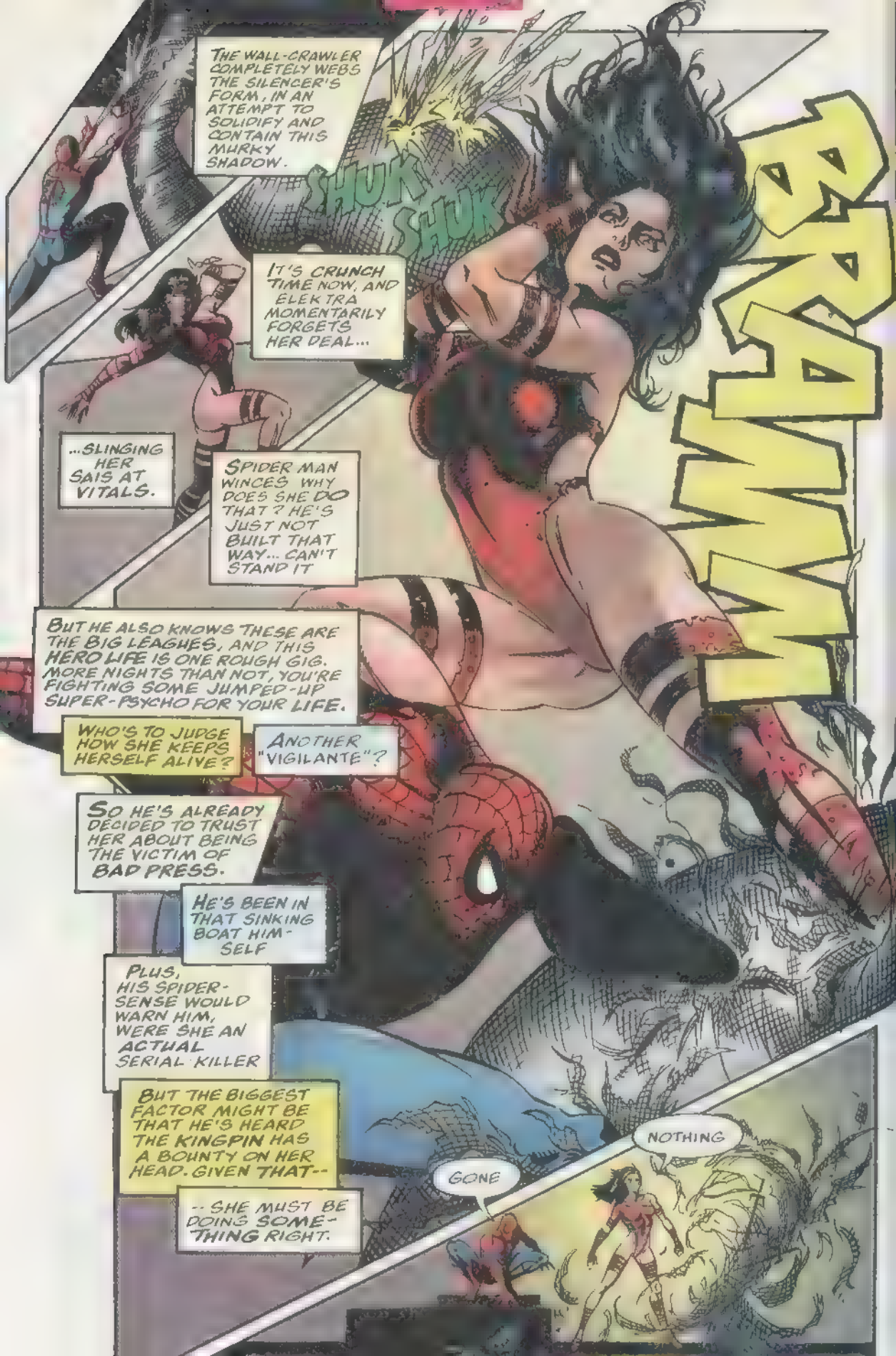
HEY, MAC THIS IS "BIG BEAR."
IF YOU'RE HEARING THIS, SOMETHING "MAJOR" HAS GONE DOWN, AND I'VE PROBABLY COME TO THE "END OF MY LONG TALE."
PROMISE YOU'LL HAVE A "DRINK" IN MY HONOR, YOU OLD "MISER."
IT'S SAM, BUT IT'S NOT.
IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS...GRGLL.. HE'S CODING IT. HOPING I'LL GET IT AND SCARPETTI WON'T.
WELL, HE'D NEVER CALL HIMSELF BIG BEAR. THAT WAS A TAG THE PRESS HUNG ON HIM.
KOFF KOFF
HE HATED IT.
AND THE BIT ABOUT THE DRINK. HE KNOWS I DON'T TOUCH THE STUFF AND NEVER DID. AS FAR AS ME BEING A MISER...
GRRGLL... KOFF
...LET'S JUST LEAVE IT THAT HE KNEW THAT WASN'T TRUE. AND NEEDLING OR SARCASM WERE NOT HIS THING.
ARRRR! IT'S ONE THING FOR SCARPETTI NOT TO UNDERSTAND, BUT WHAT GOOD IS IT IF I CAN'T ?!?
EASY, MAC. WE'LL GET THERE.
TO ME, IT'S CLEAR HE'S STRONGLY EMPHASIZING CERTAIN WORDS.
LET'S PLAY IT AGAIN, AND TRY TO PULL THEM OUT.
MOMENTS LATER...
ELEKTRA'S RIGHT. I HEAR IT, TOO.
"BIG BEAR"...
"MAJOR..."
"END OF MY LONG TALE."
"DRINK..."
"MISER..."
"MISER..."
"MISER..."
MIZER!

THAT'S IT! IT'S ASTRONOMY!!
SAM WORKED AT THE PLANETARIUM, RIGHT? HE MUST'VE WALKED THOSE HALLS A THOUSAND TIMES!
WELL, THE MAN KNEW HIS STARS!
"BIG BEAR" IS ANOTHER NAME FOR THE CONSTELLATION URSA "MAJOR."
THE BEAR'S "LONG TAIL" IS THE BIG DIPPER -- GET IT? TAKE A DRINK
AND IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, THE BIG STAR ON THE END OF THE DIPPER'S HANDLE IS NAMED "MIZER."
WE'D BETTER GET TO THE PLANETARIUM AND CHECK OUT THE HALL OF CONSTEL-LATIONS.
I JUST RANG FOR THE NURSE, MAC... HAVE HER CALL THE POLICE FOR THAT TRASH ON THE FLOOR
TRY NOT TO WORRY. WE WON'T LET SCARPETTI GET AWAY WITH KILLING YOUR FRIEND, AND DOING THIS TO YOU.
YOU JUST REST AND GET WELL.
PLEASE.
I...
I LOVE YOU


THE PLANETARIUM..
B-KROOF
IT'S AN OLD BURGLAR'S TRICK...
...TAPING UP A WINDOW TO DEADEN THE SOUND OF BREAKING IT...
...AND TO KEEP THE SHARDS FROM CLATTERING.
WEB FLUID WORKS EVEN BETTER.
HE NEARLY WARNS HER TO BE QUIET, BEFORE REMEMBERING SHE'S A NINJA.
SHE ALMOST ADVISES HIM TO TREAD LIGHTLY...
THEN RECALLS HIS NAME.
THE HALL OF CONSTELLATIONS.
MILKY WHITE LUCITE ORBS DANGLE FROM AN EBONY CEILING.
WHEN ILLUMINATED, THEY FORM A BREATHTAKING REPRESENTATION OF THE NIGHT HEAVENS.
SEE? THERE'S URSA MAJOR... THERE'S THE BIG DIPPER...
...AND HERE'S MIZER.


HE PLUCKS IT OFF OF THE CEILING.
IT RATTLES
A SIMPLE TWIST.
KRIKK
HELLO.
SMART, SPIDER MAN. IMPRESSIVE.
THERE'S A SMALL KEY TAPED TO A NOTE. "GLEASON'S GYM--LOCKER #62. - SAM" THAT'S WHERE THE FIGHTERS TRAIN, RIGHT?
IT USED TO BE ON THE WEST SIDE, BUT NOW IT'S OVER IN BROOKLYN.
GLAD WE'RE NOT PAYING FOR CABS, HUH, ?
THROUGH THE ARCHWAY BEHIND THEM IS AN EXHIBITION ON BLACK HOLES IN SPACE.
IT MUST'VE JUST GONE UP. THE PAINT ON THE MAIN MURAL'S STILL WET. IN FACT, IT'S DRIPPING.
DRIPPING?
UH-OH. WAIT, ELEKTRA .. MY SPIDER-SENSE..
YES BUT I FEEL IT, TOO...
HE'S HERE!
HE TAILED US!

FROM THE INKY BLACK OF HIMSELF, THE GRIM PHANTOM DRAWS GLEAMING TWIN FIGHTING BLADES...
.. AND THE CRUEL STORM WHOSE FOREBODING APPROACH THEY HAD SENSED
- ERUPTS!
UNGH!
METEORITE ALASKA 1909
SKRAKKT
WHUNK
FREEZE!!
Y-YOU CAN'T BE IN HERE!!
RENT-A-COP.
WHUD
IN A STRAIGHT-UP TRADE, HE LOSES TWO TEETH, BUT KEEPS HIS LIFE.
THOK


THE WALL-CRAWLER COMPLETELY WEBS THE SILENCER'S FORM, IN AN ATTEMPT TO SOLIDIFY AND CONTAIN THIS MURKY SHADOW.
SHUK SHUK
IT'S CRUNCH TIME NOW, AND ELEKTRA MOMENTARILY FORGETS HER DEAL...
...SLINGING HER SAIS AT VITALS.
SPIDER MAN WINCES WHY DOES SHE DO THAT? HE'S JUST NOT BUILT THAT WAY... CAN'T STAND IT
BRAWL
BUT HE ALSO KNOWS THESE ARE THE BIG LEAGUES, AND THIS HERO LIFE IS ONE ROUGH GIG. MORE NIGHTS THAN NOT, YOU'RE FIGHTING SOME JUMPED-UP SUPER-PSYCHO FOR YOUR LIFE.
WHO'S TO JUDGE HOW SHE KEEPS HERSELF ALIVE?
ANOTHER "VIGILANTE"?
SO HE'S ALREADY DECIDED TO TRUST HER ABOUT BEING THE VICTIM OF BAD PRESS.
HE'S BEEN IN THAT SINKING BOAT HIM-SELF
PLUS, HIS SPIDER-SENSE WOULD WARN HIM, WERE SHE AN ACTUAL SERIAL KILLER
BUT THE BIGGEST FACTOR MIGHT BE THAT HE'S HEARD THE KINGPIN HAS A BOUNTY ON HER HEAD. GIVEN THAT--
-- SHE MUST BE DOING SOME-THING RIGHT.
NOTHING
GONE

A BRACE OF SILENCED 45's TO CLOSE THE SHOW...
UN "ONORE, RAGNO UOMO."
WHAT? WHAT DID HE SAY?
DON'T KNOW. WASN'T GREEK.
CAN'T TOUCH HIM, CAN'T UNDER-STAND HIM...
HOPE YOU'RE THINKING FAST, SPIDER-MAN.
THANKS, LADY.
GIVING GROUND, ELEKTRA NEARLY STUMBLES OVER THE FRACTURED HUNKS OF METEORITE...
AND NO ONE NOTICES HER SAI SLOWLY SKITTERING ACROSS THE FLOOR...
...UNTIL...
KLINK
COSA?
THE MAGNETISM, OR SOMETHING IN THAT SHATTERED METEORITE, PULLED AT HIM. IT'S THE FIRST AND ONLY THING THEY'VE SEEN HAVE ANY EFFECT ON THIS SWIRLING, STYGIAN WRAITH.
THEY BOTH SAW IT.
THEY KNOW EACH OTHER SAW IT.
THEY'VE BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME...

THEY MOVE.
CHOOF
CHOOF
CHOOF
UNGH! THING'S DENSE!
AT FIRST...
...IT'S INSIDE HIM.
SHUFF
AARGH!
BUT THEN...
AAAAAAAAA
KRAMM
OTCH! HOT!
YOU'RE REALLY FREAKIN' ME, PAL.
SSSSSSS

UNDER THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE, SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER...
MMMNN... WHEN YOU OPENED THAT GYM LOCKER, I COULD HARDLY BELIEVE IT. THERE IT WAS, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS! PLUS THE MURDER WEAPON AND A MANUSCRIPT FROM SAM, LAYING THE WHOLE THING OUT.
YEAH. SAYS HERE SCARPETTI IS BEING HELD WITHOUT BAIL, AND THE CASE LOOKS BULLETPROOF. THE DNA AND BALLISTICS BOTH WERE A MATCH.
YOU KNEW SAM... DO YOU BELIEVE HIM ABOUT NOT BEING THE TRIGGER MAN--ONLY THE DRIVER?
YES, I DO. SAM WAS A FIGHTER, BUT THERE'S A BIG LEAP BETWEEN THAT AND A KILLER.
SO HE ONLY HAD THE STUFF BECAUSE THEY'D TOLD HIM HOW AND WHERE TO DITCH IT, WHILE THEY WENT TO A LITTLE GIRL'S BIRTHDAY PARTY!
AND SPEAKING OF LITTLE GIRLS, I HEARD THAT YOU, WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM THE BUGLE SCHOLARSHIP FUND, ARE PUTTING SAM'S GRANDDAUGHTER THROUGH SCHOOL.
IT WOULD'VE MADE SAM VERY HAPPY, I'M SURE.
WHILE YOU'RE CHECKING THE HEADLINES, SPIDER-MAN, WHY DON'T YOU TURN THE PAPER OVER?
YES, I SAW IT, ELEKTRA. THE LEAD STORY IN THE SPORTS SECTION'S ALL ABOUT MAC... AND AGAIN, I AM REALLY SORRY.
HE WAS A STRONG, BRAVE MAN. A TRULY RIGHT GUY.
IT WAS AN HONOR TO COVER HIS CAREER, ELEKTRA. I ONLY WISH I HADN'T HAD TO WRITE HIS OBITUARY.
DID YOU TELL THEM THE TRUTH, MR. IGOE? DID YOU WRITE WHO REALLY KILLED MacKINLEY STEWART?
THAT IT WAS ELEKTRA, IN HER SELFISHNESS? BECAUSE SHE WANTED TO PRETEND TO HAVE A NORMAL LIFE?
THOSE CHEAP THUGS DIDN'T KILL MAC. HE DIED BECAUSE HE COULDN'T DEFEND HIMSELF AFTER A GROUP OF NINJAS BEAT HIM NEARLY TO DEATH--
--JUST TO GET AT ME.
WHAT SHE SAYS HITS HOME, SPIDER-MAN. MAKES ME THINK ABOUT MYSELF...
I'M GOING. GOOD-BYE.
...AND SAM.
Y'KNOW, MAX, IT'S FUNNY WE SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT THIS HERE.
YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE ME, BUT I KNOW EXACTLY HOW YOU FEEL.
AND I WISH I COULD TELL YOU THAT TIME HEALS. UNFORTUNATELY, I CAN'T...
...BUT YOU DO LEARN HOW TO LIVE WITH THE PAIN.

SING SING. A PENITENTIARY IN UPSTATE NEW YORK.
IT'S THE BRICKS OF JOHN LAW THAT THEY INVENTED THE SAYING "UP THE RIVER" TO DESCRIBE.
HEY, BOSS. HOW'S THE EAR?
EH, ON MY HEAD.
I'VE WRITTEN SOME MORE POETRY I WANT YOU TO TRANSLATE. VERY CAREFULLY.
I ALWAYS DO.
AND REMEMBER... EYES AND EARS OPEN.
AS FAR AS ANYTHING'S CONCERNED, THIS IS JUST A CHANGE OF ADDRESS.
WITHOUT QUESTION, BOSS.
WITHOUT QUESTION.
RAVENCROFT. AN ASYLUM FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE.
THE STEEL DOOR ON THIS TINY MAXIMUM SECURITY VAULT IS THREE FEET THICK.
IT'S BEEN SEALED AIRTIGHT.
FINITO?